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ABSTRACT

This document includes two articles describing the failure of the international human rights movement to consider or remedy the situation of women outside of the basic demand for political rights of people in general. The first article, "Women's Rights as Human Rights: Toward a Re-Vision of Human Rights" (Charlotte Bunch), emphasizes the responsibility of governments and patriarchy for the perpetuation of violence against women. Little is done to remedy domestic violence, and in many countries females are routinely denied education, health care, and proper nutrition, with the result that they are unable to escape from the subjugated position that is traditional to the culture. The article explores the importance and difficulty of connecting women's rights to human rights. Four basic approaches that have been used to make the connection are: (1) women's rights as political and civil rights, (2) women's rights as socio-economic rights, (3) women's rights and the law, and (4) a feminist transformation of human rights. The second article, "Violence Against Women: An Obstacle to Development" (Roxanna Carrillo), specifically looks at strategies for combating violence against women as related to development planning. At multiple program levels, an awareness of cultural specific forms of gender violence can help identify and overcome obstacles impeding women's participation. Such programs must recognize that change can be threatening and can result in more violence. Women must be trained in communication skills, awareness of possible actions, management skills, and self defense. On a very direct level, projects can test one or more education campaigns and seek to make violence unacceptable within a society. (DK)

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GENDER VIOLENCE

A DEVELOPMENT AND HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE

CHARLOTTE BUNCH

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CENTER FOR WOMEN'S GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

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A DEVELOPMENT AND HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE

WOMEN'S RIGHTS AS HUMAN RIGHTS:
TOWARD A RE-VISION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

CHARLOTTE BUNCH

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN:
AN OBSTACLE TO DEVELOPMENT

ROXANNA CARRILLO

CENTER FOR WOMEN'S GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

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PREFACE

The Center for Women's Global Leadership is pleased to publish this booklet as the first in its series of working papers on Women, Violence, and Human Rights. The series is intended to promote international discussion of critical conceptual and strategic questions regarding gender violence and female human rights.

The papers presented here developed out of the Center's work during its first two years. "Women's Rights as Human Rights: Toward a Re-Vision of Human Rights" began as an outline for my seminar on "Global Feminism and Human Rights" taught in 1988 when I was the Laurie New Jersey Chair in Women's Studies at Douglass College, Rutgers University. My occupancy of that chair and its seminars were central to the founding of the Center by Douglass College in 1989. This article evolved from classroom notes into a speech for the Annual General Meeting of Amnesty International USA in 1989 and then into a background paper for the International Planning Meeting held by the Global Center in May of 1990. It was published later that year and served as a working paper for the Center's first Women's Leadership Institute in June of 1991.

"Violence Against Women: An Obstacle to Development" by Roxanna Carrillo was written while she was a Political Science graduate student at Rutgers University and working on the staff of the Center for Women's Global Leadership. The paper emerged from a collaborative research effort initiated and sponsored by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), in conjunction with the Global Center. It led to both a position paper on gender violence as a development issue for UNIFEM and this article prepared as a background working paper for the Center's 1991 Women's Leadership Institute, for which Roxanna served as the Coordinator.

Many people helped create the Center for Women's Global Leadership and thus enabled this publication. Mary Hartman, Dean of Douglass College, and Ruth Mandel, Director of the Center for the American Woman and Politics at Rutgers, are its founding mothers and sustaining advisors. The Center's programs depend on the hard work of the secretary, Diana Gerace, and dedicated students who have made up its staff: Roxanna Carrillo, Susana Fried, Niamh Reilly, Lourdes Bueno, Lauren McIntyre, Susan Roche, Heisoo Shin, Rosa Briceno, Kathleen Casey, Lisa Coxson, and Stephanie Lentini. Support has also come from volunteers, Rutgers faculty and staff, and related Rutgers programs that have been generous with advice and assistance. Critical early funding for the Center came from Rutgers University, the Associate Alumnae of Douglass College, the Ford Foundation, and the Joe and Emily Lowe Foundation. Cici Kinsman took on the task of getting this booklet published. I want to thank all of the above as well as many more too numerous to list for helping to make this publication and the Global Center a reality.

Charlotte Bunch, *Director*

CHARLOTTE BUNCH

WOMEN'S RIGHTS AS HUMAN RIGHTS: TOWARD A RE-VISION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Significant numbers of the world's population are routinely subject to torture, starvation, terrorism, humiliation, mutilation, and even murder simply because they are female. Crimes such as these against any group other than women would be recognized as a civil and political emergency as well as a gross violation of the victim's humanity. Yet, despite a clear record of deaths and demonstrable abuse, women's rights are not commonly classified as human rights. This is problematic both theoretically and practically, because it has grave consequences for the way society views and treats the fundamental issues of women's lives. This paper questions why women's rights and human rights are viewed as distinct, looks at the policy implications of this schism, and discusses different approaches to changing it.

Women's human rights are violated in a variety of ways. Of course, women sometimes suffer abuses such as political repression in ways that are similar to abuses suffered by men. In these situations, female victims are often invisible because the dominant image of the political actor in our world is male. However, many violations of women's human rights are distinctly connected to being female—that is, women are discriminated against and abused on the basis of gender. Women also experience sexual abuse in situations where their other human rights are being violated, as political prisoners or members of persecuted ethnic groups for example. In this paper I address those abuses in which gender is a primary or related factor because gender-related

abuse has been most neglected and offers the greatest challenge to the field of human rights today.

The concept of human rights is one of the few moral visions subscribed to internationally. Although its scope is not universally agreed upon, it strikes deep chords of response among many. Promotion of human rights is a widely accepted goal and thus provides a useful framework for seeking redress of gender abuse. Further, it is one of the few concepts that speaks to the need for transnational activism and concern about the lives of people globally. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights[1] adopted in 1948 symbolizes this world vision and defines human rights broadly. While not much is said about women, Article 2 entitles all to "the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status." Eleanor Roosevelt and the Latin American women who fought for the inclusion of sex in the Declaration and for its passage, clearly intended that it would address the problems of women's subordination.[2]

Since 1948, the world community has continuously debated varying interpretations of human rights in response to global developments. Little of this discussion, however, has addressed questions of gender, and only recently have significant challenges been made to a vision of human rights which excludes much of women's experiences. The concept of human rights, like all vibrant visions, is not static or the property of any one group; rather its meaning expands as people reconceive of their needs and hopes in relation to it. In this spirit, feminists redefine human rights abuses to include the degradation and violation of women. The specific experiences of women must be added to traditional approaches to human rights in order to make women more visible and to transform the concept and practice of human rights in our culture so that it takes better account of women's lives.

In this article, I will explore both the importance and the difficulty of connecting women's rights to human rights, and then I will outline four basic approaches that have been used in the effort to make this connection.

I. BEYOND RHETORIC: POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS

Few governments exhibit more than token commitment to women's equality as a basic human right in domestic or foreign policy. No government determines its policies toward other countries on the basis of their treatment of women, even when some aid and trade decisions are said to be based on a country's human rights record. Among non-governmental organizations, women are rarely a priority, and Human Rights Day programs on 10 December seldom include discussion of issues like violence against women or reproductive rights. When it is suggested that governments and human rights organizations should respond to women's rights as concerns that deserve such attention, a number of excuses are offered for why this cannot be done. The responses tend to follow one or more of these lines: (1) sex discrimination is too trivial, or not as important, or will come after larger issues of survival that require more serious attention; (2) abuse of women, while regrettable, is a cultural, private, or individual issue and not a political matter requiring state action; (3) while appropriate for other action, women's rights are not human rights per se; or (4) when the abuse of women is recognized, it is called inevitable or so pervasive that consideration of it is futile or will overwhelm other human rights questions. It is important to challenge these responses.

The narrow definition of human rights, recognized by many in the West as solely a matter of state violation of civil and political liberties, impedes consideration of women's rights. In the United States the concept has been further limited by some who have used it as a weapon in the cold war almost exclusively to challenge human rights abuses perpetrated in communist countries. Even then, many abuses that affected women, such as forced pregnancy in Romania, were ignored.

Some important aspects of women's rights do fit into a civil liberties framework, but much of the abuse against women is part of a larger socioeconomic web that entraps women, making them vulnerable to abuses which cannot be delineated as exclusively political or solely caused by states. The inclusion of "second generation" or socioeconomic human rights to food, shelter, and work—which are clearly delineated as part of the Universal

Declaration of Human Rights—is vital to addressing women's concerns fully. Further, the assumption that states are not responsible for most violations of women's rights ignores the fact that such abuses, although committed perhaps by private citizens, are often condoned or sanctioned by states. I will return to the question of state responsibility after responding to other instances of resistance to women's rights as human rights.

The most insidious myth about women's rights is that they are trivial or secondary to the concerns of life and death. Nothing could be farther from the truth: sexism kills. There is increasing documentation of the many ways in which being female is life-threatening. The following are a few examples:

- *Before birth:* Amniocentesis is used for sex selection leading to the abortion of more female fetuses at rates as high as 99 percent in Bombay, India; in China and India, the two most populous nations, more males are born than females even though natural birth ratios would produce more females.[3]
- *During childhood:* The World Health Organization reports that in many countries, girls are fed less, breast fed for shorter periods of time, taken to doctors less frequently, and die or are physically and mentally maimed by malnutrition at higher rates than boys.[4]
- *In adulthood:* The denial of women's rights to control their bodies in reproduction threatens women's lives, especially where this is combined with poverty and poor health services. In Latin America, complications from illegal abortions are the leading cause of death for women between the ages of fifteen and thirty- nine.[5]

Sex discrimination kills women daily. When combined with race, class, and other forms of oppression, it constitutes a deadly denial of women's rights to life and liberty on a large scale throughout the world. The most pervasive violation of females is violence against women in all its manifestations, from wife battery, incest, and rape, to dowry deaths[6], genital mutilation[7], and female sexual slavery. These abuses occur in every country and are found in the home and in the workplace, on streets, campuses, and in prisons and refugee camps. They cross class, race, age, and national lines, and at the same time, the forms this violence takes often reinforce other oppressions such as racism, "able-bodyism," and imperialism. Case in point: in order to feed their families, poor women in brothels around U.S. military bases in places like the

Philippines bear the burden of sexual, racial, and national imperialism in repeated and often brutal violation of their bodies.

Even a short review of random statistics reveals that the extent of violence against women globally is staggering:

- In the United States, battery is the leading cause of injury to adult women, and a rape is committed every six minutes.[8]
- In Peru 70 percent of all crimes reported to police involve women who are beaten by their partners; and in Lima (a city of seven million people), 168,970 rapes were reported in 1987 alone.[9]
- In India, eight out of ten wives are victims of violence, either domestic battery, dowry-related abuse, or among the least fortunate, murder.[10]
- In France, a very high percentage of the victims of violence are women; 51 percent at the hands of a spouse or lover. Similar statistics from places as diverse as Bangladesh, Canada, Kenya, and Thailand demonstrate that more than 50 percent of female homicides were committed by family members.[11]

Where recorded, domestic battery figures range from 40 percent to 80 percent of women beaten, usually repeatedly, indicating that the home is the most dangerous place for women and frequently the site of cruelty and torture. As the Carol Stuart murder in Boston in 1989 demonstrated, sexist and racist attitudes in the United States often cover up the real threat to women; a woman is murdered in Massachusetts by a husband or lover every 22 days.[12]

Such numbers do not reflect the full extent of the problem of violence against women, much of which remains hidden. Yet rather than receiving recognition as a major world conflict, this violence is accepted as normal or even dismissed as an individual or cultural matter. Georgina Ashworth notes that:

> The greatest restriction of liberty, dignity and movement, and at the same time, direct violation of the person is the threat and realisation of violence. However violence against the female sex, on a scale which far exceeds the list of Amnesty International victims, is tolerated publicly; indeed some acts of violation are not crimes in law, others are legitimized in custom or court opinion, and most are blamed on the victims themselves.[13]

Violence against women is a touchstone that illustrates the limited concept of human rights and highlights the political nature

of the abuse of women. As Lori Heise states: "this is not random violence ... the risk factor is being female."[1] Victims are chosen because of their gender. The message is domination: stay in your place or be afraid. Contrary to the argument that such violence is only personal or cultural, it is profoundly political. It results from the structural relationships of power, domination and privilege between men and women in society. Violence against women is central to maintaining those political relations at home, at work, and in all public spheres.

Failure to see the oppression of women as political also results in the exclusion of sex discrimination and violence against women from the human rights agenda. Female subordination runs so deep that it is still viewed as inevitable or natural, rather than seen as a politically constructed reality maintained by patriarchal interests, ideology, and institutions. But I do not believe that male violation of women is inevitable or natural. Such a belief requires a narrow and pessimistic view of men. If violence and domination are understood as a politically constructed reality, it is possible to imagine deconstructing that system and building more just interactions between the sexes.

The physical territory of this political struggle over what constitutes women's human rights is women's bodies. The importance of control over women can be seen in the intensity of resistance to laws and social changes that put control of women's bodies in women's hands: reproductive rights, freedom of sexuality whether heterosexual or lesbian, laws that criminalize rape in marriage, etc. Denial of reproductive rights and homophobia are also political means of maintaining control over women and perpetuating sex roles and power which have human rights implications. The physical abuse of women is a reminder of this territorial domination and is sometimes accompanied by other forms of human rights abuse such as slavery (forced prostitution), sexual terrorism (rape), imprisonment (confinement to the home) or torture (systematic battery). Some cases are extreme, such as the women in Thailand who died in a brothel fire because they were chained to their beds. Most situations are more ordinary like denying women decent education or jobs which leaves them prey to abusive marriages, exploitative work, and prostitution.

This raises once again the question of the state's responsi-

bility for protecting women's human rights. Feminists have shown how the distinction between private and public abuse is a dichotomy often used to justify female subordination in the home. Governments regulate many matters in the family and individual spheres. For example, human rights activists pressure states to prevent slavery or racial discrimination and segregation even when these are conducted by nongovernmental forces in private, or proclaimed as cultural traditions, as they have been in both the southern United States and in South Africa. The real questions are: (1) who decides what are legitimate human rights and, (2) when should the state become involved and for what purposes. Riane Eisler argues that

> the issue is what types of private acts are and are not protected by the right to privacy and/or the principle of family autonomy. Even more specifically, the issue is whether violations of human rights within the family such as genital mutilation, wife beating, and other forms of violence designed to maintain patriarchal control should be within the purview of human rights theory and action. . . . [T]he underlying problem for human rights theory, as for most other fields of theory, is that the yardstick that has been developed for defining and measuring human rights has been based on the male as norm.

The human rights community must move beyond its male defined norms in order to respond to the brutal and systematic violation of women globally. This does not mean that every human rights group must alter the focus of its work. However it does require examining patriarchal biases and acknowledging the rights of women as human rights. Governments must seek to end the politically and culturally constructed war on women rather than continue to perpetuate it. Every state has the responsibility to intervene in the abuse of women's rights within its borders and to end its collusion with the forces that perpetrate such violations in other countries.

II. TOWARD ACTION: PRACTICAL APPROACHES

The classification of human rights is more than just a semantics problem because it has practical policy consequences. Human rights are still considered to be more important than

women's rights. The distinction perpetuates the idea that the rights of women are of a lesser order than the "rights of man," and as Eisler describes it, "serves to justify practices that do not accord women full and equal status."[16] In the United Nations, the Human Rights Commission has more power to hear and investigate cases than the Commission on the Status of Women, more staff and budget, and better mechanisms for implementing its findings. Thus it makes a difference in what can be done if a case is deemed a violation of women's rights and not of human rights.[17]

The determination of refugee status illustrates how the definition of human rights affects people's lives. The Dutch Refugee Association, in its pioneering efforts to convince nations to recognize sexual persecution and violence against women as justifications for granting refugee status, found that some European governments would take sexual persecution into account as an aspect of other forms of political repression, but none would make it the grounds for refugee status per se.[18] The implications of such a distinction are clear when examining a situation like that of some Bangladeshi women, who having been raped during the Pakistan-Bangladesh war, subsequently faced death at the hands of male relatives to preserve "family honor." Western powers professed outrage but did not offer asylum to these victims of human rights abuse.

I have observed four basic approaches to linking women's rights to human rights. These approaches are presented separately here in order to identify each more clearly. In practice, these approaches often overlap, and while each raises questions about the others, I see them as complementary. These approaches can be applied to many issues, but I will illustrate them primarily in terms of how they address violence against women in order to show the implications of their differences on a concrete issue.

1. Women's Rights as Political and Civil Rights. Taking women's specific needs into consideration as part of the already recognized "first generation" human rights of political and civil liberties is the first approach. This involves both enhancing the visibility of women who suffer general human rights violations as well as calling attention to particular abuses women encounter because they are female. Thus, issues of violence against women

are raised when they connect to other forms of violation such as the sexual torture of women political prisoners in South America.[19] Groups like the Women's Task Force of Amnesty International have taken this approach in pushing for Amnesty to launch a campaign on behalf of women political prisoners which would address the sexual abuse and rape of women in custody, their lack of maternal care in detention, and the resulting human rights abuse of their children.

Documenting the problems of women refugees and developing responsive policies are other illustrations of this approach. Women and children make up more than 80 percent of those in refugee camps, yet few refugee policies are specifically shaped to meet the needs of these vulnerable populations who face considerable sexual abuse. For example, in one camp where men were allocated the community's rations, some gave food to women and their children in exchange for sex. Revealing this abuse led to new policies that allocated food directly to the women.[20]

The political and civil rights approach is a useful starting point for many human rights groups; by considering women's experiences, these groups can expand their efforts in areas where they are already working. This approach also raises contradictions that reveal the limits of a narrow civil liberties view. One contradiction is to define rape as a human rights abuse only when it occurs in state custody but not on the streets or in the home. Another is to say that a violation of the right to free speech occurs when someone is jailed for defending gay rights, but not when someone is jailed or even tortured and killed for homosexuality. Thus while this approach of adding women and stirring them into existing first generation human rights categories is useful, it is not enough by itself.

2. Women's Rights as Socioeconomic Rights. The second approach includes the particular plight of women with regard to the so-called "second generation" human rights such as rights to food, shelter, health care, and employment. This is an approach favored by those who see the dominant Western human rights tradition and international law as too individualistic and identify women's oppression as primarily economic.

This tendency has its origins among socialists and labor activists who have long argued that political human rights are meaningless to many without economic rights as well. It focuses on the primacy of the need to end women's economic subordination as the key to other issues including women's vulnerability to violence. This particular focus has led to work on issues like women's right to organize as workers, and opposition to violence in the workplace, especially in situations like the free trade zones which have targeted women as cheap, nonorganized labor. Another focus of this approach has been highlighting the feminization of poverty, or what might better be called the increasing impoverishment of females. Poverty has not become strictly female, but females now comprise a higher percentage of the poor.

Looking at women's rights in the context of socioeconomic development is another example of this approach. Third World peoples have called for an understanding of socioeconomic development as a human rights issue.[7] Within this demand, some have sought to integrate women into development and have examined women's specific needs in relation to areas like land ownership or access to credit. Among those working on women in development, there is growing interest in violence against women as both a health and development issue. If violence is seen as having negative consequences for social productivity, it may get more attention. This type of narrow economic measure, however, should not determine whether such violence is seen as a human rights concern. Violence as a development issue is linked to the need to understand development not just as an economic issue but also as a question of empowerment and human growth.

One of the limitations of this second approach has been its tendency to reduce women's needs to the economic sphere, which implies that women's rights will follow automatically with third world development, or socialism. This has not proven to be the case. Many working from this approach are no longer trying to add women into either the Western capitalist or socialist development models, but rather seek a transformative development process that links women's political, economic and cultural empowerment.

3. Women's Rights and the Law. The creation of new legal mechanisms to counter sex discrimination characterizes the third approach to women's rights as human rights. These efforts seek to make existing legal and political institutions work for women and to expand the state's responsibility for the violation of women's human rights. National and local laws which address sex discrimination and violence against women are examples of this approach. These measures allow women to fight for their rights within the legal system. The primary international illustration is the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.[22]

The Convention has been described as "essentially an international bill of rights for women and a framework for women's participation in the development process . . . [which] spells out internationally accepted principles and standards for achieving equality between women and men".[23] Adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979, the Convention has been ratified or acceded to by 104 countries as of January, 1990. In theory these countries are obligated to pursue policies in accordance with it and to report on their compliance to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

While the Convention addresses many issues of sex discrimination, one of its shortcomings is failure to directly address the question of violence against women. CEDAW passed a resolution at its eighth Session in Vienna in 1989 expressing concern that this issue be on its agenda and instructing states to include in their periodic reports information about statistics, legislation, and support services in this area.[24] The Commonwealth Secretariat in its manual on the reporting process for the Convention also interprets the issue of violence against women as "clearly fundamental to the spirit of the Convention," especially in Article 5 which calls for the modification of social and cultural patterns, sex roles and stereotyping, that are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either sex.[25]

The Convention outlines a clear human rights agenda for women which, if accepted by governments, would mark an enormous step forward. It also carries the limitations of all such international documents in that there is little power to demand its implementation. Within the United Nations, it is not generally

regarded as a convention with teeth, as illustrated by the difficulty that CEDAW has had in getting countries to report on compliance with its provisions. Further, it is still treated by governments and most nongovernmental organizations as a document dealing with women's (read "secondary") rights, not human rights. Nevertheless, it is a useful statement of principles endorsed by the United Nations around which women can organize to achieve legal and political change in their regions.

4. Feminist Transformation of Human Rights. Transforming the human rights concept from a feminist perspective, so that it will take greater account of women's lives, is the fourth approach. This approach raises the question of how women's rights relate to human rights by first looking at the violations of women's lives and asking how the human rights concept can be changed to be more responsive to women. For example, the GABRIELA women's coalition in the Philippines simply stated that "Women's Rights *are* Human Rights" in launching a campaign last year. As Ninotchka Rosca explained, coalition members saw that "human rights are not reducible to a question of legal and due process. . . . In the case of women, human rights are affected by the entire society's traditional perception of what is proper or not proper for women."[7] Similarly a panel at the 1990 International Women's Rights Action Watch conference asserted that "Violence Against Women is a Human Rights Issue." While work in the three previous approaches is often done from a feminist perspective, this last view is the most distinctly feminist with its woman-centered stance and its refusal to wait for permission from some authority to determine what is or is not a human rights issue.

This transformative approach can be taken toward any issue, but those working from this approach have tended to focus most on abuses that arise specifically out of gender, such as reproductive rights, female sexual slavery, violence against women, and "family crimes" like forced marriage, compulsory heterosexuality, and female mutilation. These are also the issues most often dismissed as not really human rights questions. This is therefore the most hotly contested area and requires that barriers be broken down between public and private, state and non-governmental responsibilities.

Those working to transform the human rights vision from this perspective can draw on the work of others who have expanded the understanding of human rights previously. For example, two decades ago there was no concept of "disappearances" as a human rights abuse. However, the women of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina did not wait for an official declaration but stood up to demand state accountability for these crimes. In so doing, they helped to create a context for expanding the concept of responsibility for deaths at the hands of paramilitary or right-wing death squads which, even if not carried out by the state, were allowed to happen. Another example in the United States is the developing concept that civil rights violations include "hate crimes," violence that is racially motivated or directed against homosexuals, Jews, or other minority groups. Many accept that states have an obligation to work to prevent such human rights abuses, and getting violence against women seen as a hate crime is being pursued by some.

The practical applications of transforming the human rights concept from feminist perspectives need to be explored further. The danger in pursuing only this approach is the tendency to become isolated from and competitive with other human rights groups because they have been so reluctant to address gender violence and discrimination. Yet, most women experience abuse on the grounds of sex, race, class, nation, age, sexual preference, politics, etc. as interrelated, and little benefit comes from separating them as competing claims. The human rights community need not abandon other issues but should incorporate gender perspectives into them and see how these expand the terms of their work. By recognizing issues like violence against women as human rights concerns, human rights scholars and activists do not have to take these up as their primary tasks. However they do have to stop gate-keeping and guarding their prerogative to determine what is considered a "legitimate" human rights issue.

As mentioned before, these four approaches are overlapping and many strategies for change involve elements of more than one. All of these approaches contain aspects of what is necessary to achieve women's rights. At a time when dualist ways of thinking and views of competing economic systems are in question, the creative task is to look for ways to connect these approaches and to see how we can go beyond exclusive views of

what people need in their lives. In the words of an early feminist group, we need bread and roses too. Women want food and liberty and the possibility of living lives of dignity, free from domination and violence. In this struggle, the recognition of women's rights as human rights can play an important role.

ENDNOTES

1. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted 10 December 1948, G.A. Res. 217A(III), U.N. Doc. A/810 (1948).

2. Blanche Wiesen Cook, "Eleanor Roosevelt and Human Rights: The Battle for Peace and Planetary Decency," Edward P. Crapol, ed. *Women and American Foreign Policy: Lobbyists, Critics, and Insiders* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1987), 98-118; Georgina Ashworth, "Of Violence and Violation: Women and Human Rights," Change Thinkbook II (London, 1986).

3. Vibhuti Patel, *In Search of Our Bodies: A Feminist Look at Women, Health and Reproduction in India* (Bombay: Shakti, 1987); Lori Heise, "International Dimensions of Violence Against Women," *Response*, vol. 12, no. 1 (1989): 3.

4. Sundari Ravindran, *Health Implications of Sex Discrimination in Childhood* (Geneva: World Health Organization, 1986). These problems and proposed social programs to counter them in India are discussed in detail in "Gender Violence: Gender Discrimination Between Boy and Girl in Parental Family," paper published by CHETNA (Child Health Education Training and Nutrition Awareness), Ahmedabad, 1989.

5. Debbie Taylor, ed. *Women: A World Report, A New Internationalist Book* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 10. See Joni Seager and Ann Olson, eds., *Women in the World: An International Atlas* (London: Pluto Press, 1986) for more statistics on the effects of sex discrimination.

6. Sometimes a husband will disguise the murder of a bride as suicide or an accident in order to collect the marriage settlement paid to him by the bride's parents. Although dowry is now illegal in many countries, official records for 1987 showed 1,786 dowry deaths in India alone. See Heise, note 3 above, 5.

7. For an in-depth examination of the practice of female circumcision see Alison T. Slack, "Female Circumcision: A Critical Appraisal," Human Rights Quarterly 10 (1988): 439.

8. Everett Koop, M.D., "Violence Against Women: A Global Problem," Presentation by the Surgeon General of the U.S. Public Health Service, Washington D.C., 1989.

9. Ana Maria Portugal, "Cronica de Una Violacion Provocada?," Fempress especial "Contraviolencia," Santiago, 1988; Seager and Olson, note 5 above; 37; Heise, Note 3 above.

10. Ashworth, note 2 above, 9.

11. "Violence Against Women in the Family," Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, United Nations Office at Vienna, 1989.

12. Bella English, "Stereotypes Led Us Astray," *The Boston Globe*, January 5, 1990, 17, col. 3. See also statistics in Women's International Network News, 1989, United Nations Vienna, note 11 above; Ashworth, note 2 above; Heise, note 3 above; and Fempress, note 9 above.

13. Ashworth, note 2 above, 8.

14. Heise, note 3 above, 3.

15. Riane Eisler, "Human Rights: Toward an Integrated Theory for Action," *Human Rights Quarterly*, 9 (1987): 297. See also Alida Brill, *Nobody's Business: The Paradoxes of Privacy* (New York: Addison-Wesley, 1990).

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22

ROXANNA CARRILLO

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: AN OBSTACLE TO DEVELOPMENT

> *Human development is a process of enlarging people's choices. The most critical of these wide-ranging choices are to live long and healthy life, to be educated and to have access to resources needed for a decent standard of living. Additional choices include political freedom, guaranteed human rights and personal self-respect. Development enables people to have these choices.*
>
> UNDP, Human Development Report 1990.

The United Nations Decade for Women helped bring attention to the critical importance of women's activities to economic and social development. However, after fifteen years of efforts to integrate women into development, women are still only marginal beneficiaries of development programs and policy goals. Various

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studies show that women remain in a disadvantaged position in employment, education, health, and government. There is no major field of activity and no country in which women have obtained equality with men (Sivard, 1985: 5)

In spite of the slow process of change, women working in the international development community have been successful in identifying issues critical for women's development that had not traditionally been understood as central to the development process. One such area is gender violence. Violence against women has previously been seen, if at all, as a private matter, a cultural and family issue, or at best, pertinent to social welfare policies. Among those concerned with the general position of women, gender violence has been addressed within the framework of promoting peace, and increasingly, as part of the human rights agenda. These approaches underscore the multiple aspects of such violence but they in no way exhaust our understanding of the problem. There are still large gaps in our knowledge concerning the dimensions and effects of gender violence on the development process itself. Lack of statistical data is one of several problems in documenting the issue. We have reached a point where it is critical to understand how violence as a form of control affects women's participation in the development process.

The emergence of violence as a crucial issue for Third World women's development has occurred organically, arising from grassroots women's endeavors, and has not been dictated by outside authorities or international agencies. For example, UNIFEM funded projects from various regions of the world increasingly identify violence as a priority concern, and/or as a problem that limits women's participation in or capacity to benefit from development projects. Women have taken leadership in making violence against women visible, and in addressing its causes, manifestations, and remedies. From the Uganda Association of Women Lawyers, to the Asia and Pacific Women, Law and Development Network, to the Trinidad Rape Crisis Centre, and the Fiji Women's Rights Movement, women's leadership in the developing world is struggling to include issues of violence against women on national agendas, and to demonstrate the ways in which violence blocks development. They confirm that gender violence, whether in its most brutal or more subtle forms, is a constant in women's

lives. In Latin America, ISIS International has identified 156 women's projects dealing with various aspects of violence against women (ISIS: 1990). In this region women's movements have institutionalized November 25 as a day to denounce and "call for action against" female focused violence. In other parts of the world similar initiatives have also been taken.

In a 1988 global survey of women's groups in developing countries, MATCH International, a Canadian NGO devoted to issues of women and development for two decades, found that violence against women was the most frequent concern raised. Women's groups identified the impact of such violence on development in concrete terms, leading MATCH to conclude:

> Violent acts against women, the world over, attack their dignity as human beings and leave them vulnerable and fearful. Conditioned to undervalue their skills and abilities and paralyzed by real fears of violence and retribution, women are marginalized in society and forced out of the decision making processes which shape and determine the development of their communities. Violence against women is not limited to any one country. The acts range from battering, incest, assault, and rape worldwide to female circumcision in Africa, dowry deaths in India, and militarization in the Philippines. Along this continuum one must also include the limited employment opportunities for women, the lack of access to education, women's social isolation and the sexual harassment that women experience daily. The manifestations of violence against women simply alter their forms according to the social, economic, and historical realities in which they occur (Match News, 1990).

MATCH has since launched a program on violence against women in relation to development as one of its top priorities.

THE EXTENT OF THE VIOLENCE

Violence against women is not a problem that affects only the poor or only women in the Third World. Yet, even among industrialized countries, few have embarked on empirical studies that provide a solid basis from which to map the true dimensions of the problem. In the developing world, with very few exceptions like Papua New Guinea, statistics are even more scant. When available, statistics powerfully document and make visible the per-

vasiveness and extent of violence against women globally.

Official statistics and survey data in the United States, for example, dramatically convey the endemic nature of gender violence. A rape occurs somewhere in the United States every 6 minutes. Domestic battery is the single most significant cause of injury to women, more than car accidents, rapes and muggings combined. Yet a 1985 FBI report estimates that wife assault is under-reported by a factor of at least ten to one. Researchers produce chilling numbers: Roy indicates that violence occurs at least once in two-thirds of all marriages; Strauss, Gelles, and Steinmetz reveal that one in eight couples admitted there had been an act of violence between them which could cause serious injury; in a study at a Connecticut hospital, Stark and Flitchcraft report that battery accounted for 25 percent of suicide attempts by women. Three different studies show that significant numbers of women are battered even when pregnant. Police report that between 40 and 60 percent of the calls they receive, especially on the night shift, are domestic disputes.

A study done in Kansas City showed that the police had already been called at least five times in the two years preceding fifty percent of all homicides by a spouse. In Cleveland, Ohio, during a nine-month period, police received approximately 15,000 domestic violence calls, but reports were filed for only 700 of them and arrests were made in just 460 cases. [According to sources from the National Center on Women and Family Law]

Statistics from other industrialized countries are equally disconcerting. Reports from France indicate that 95 percent of all victims of violence are women, 51 percent of these at the hands of their husbands. In Denmark, 25 percent of women cite violence as the reason for divorce, and a 1984 study of urban victimization in seven major Canadian cities found that 90 percent of victims were women. One in four women in Canada can expect to be sexually assaulted at some point in their lives, one half of these before the age of seventeen (MacLeod, 1990:12).

While there are fewer studies in the Third World, the pattern of gender violence there bears a remarkable similarity to that of advanced industrialized societies. Its manifestations may be culturally specific, but gender specific violence cuts across national boundaries, ideologies, classes, races and ethnic groups. A

Mexican NGO estimates that domestic violence is present in at least 70 percent of Mexican families, but most cases go unreported. The Mexican Federation of Women Trade Unions reports that 95 percent of women workers are victims of sexual harassment, and complains that the impunity of these crimes limits women's participation in the work force.

The Servicio Nacional de la Mujer in Chile has chosen the prevention of intra-family violence as one of their priorities, according to a survey in Santiago, 80 percent of women acknowledged being victims of violence in their homes. A national survey on domestic violence undertaken by the Papua New Guinea Law Reform Commission showed that in some areas of the country as many as 67 percent of wives had experienced marital violence and that 61 percent of people killed in 1981 were women, the majority by their spouses. Over two thirds of Korean women are beaten regularly by their husbands, while in Nicaragua 44 percent of men admit to having beaten their wives or girlfriends regularly, and a Thai report found at least 50 percent of all married women beaten regularly.

In a study of child prostitution in Cochabamba, Bolivia, 79 percent of the girls said they became prostitutes because of economic need when they ran away from violent homes where they were victims of incest and rape by male relatives. Another study published by the Indian government shows that crimes against women are "an increasing trend in the last decade," while the rate of conviction has declined. Meanwhile, the female suicide rate in that country doubled during the period from 1987 to 1988. A newspaper survey in Pakistan revealed that 99 percent of housewives and 77 percent of working women were beaten by their husbands and listed the following types of violence committed against women: murder over land disputes, blinded by husbands frustrated on some issue, kicked to death, burnt in anger, abducted, sold, sexually harassed, raped (AWRAN Report, 1985). Other reports cited in a United Nations document also found a high incidence of family violence in countries as different as Bangladesh, Colombia, Kenya, Kuwait, Nigeria, Vanuatu, and Uganda (UN, 1989:20).

Violence against women not only maims and debilitates. Femicide kills women on a large scale from pre-birth throughout

life. Amartya Sen has pointed out the deadly cost of social and economic inequalities between men and women by analyzing the sex ratio (of females to males) in the less developed countries (LDCs). Whereas there are 106 women per 100 men in Europe and North America, there are only 97 women per 100 men in the LDCs as a whole. In some areas, noticeably Asia, and especially India and China, when one applies the sex ratio of Africa (1.02), which comes closer to that of Europe and North America (1.06), the equation yields chilling results. Given the number of men in those two countries, there should be about 30 million more women in India, and 38 million more in China. These missing females disappeared through gender violence ranging from female feticide to selective malnourishment and starvation of girls, neglect of health problems, dowry deaths and various other forms of violence. Sen reminds us that "since mortality and survival are not independent of care and neglect, and are influenced by social action and public policy," development strategies clearly must take more account of women's needs in this area (Sen, 1990:124).

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AT INTERNATIONAL FORA

Within the context of the United Nations Decade for Women, many have begun to recognize the problem of violence against women. At all three World Conferences on Women, Mexico City (1975), Copenhagen (1980), and Nairobi (1985), and at the parallel non-governmental fora, women's advocates raised the issue of gender violence and demanded special attention to the constraints it places on women's full participation in society. The official documents produced at these events are powerful indictments of the discrimination that women face in all countries, regions and cultures, and provide a useful foundation for a different understanding of sex-related violence. They establish the concerns of the international community, and acknowledge the responsibility of governments and all members of society for its eradication. They constitute the building blocks for framing new strategies and policies to address these issues.

One of the most significant UN documents addressing gender violence in relation to development goals is the "Forward

Looking Strategies" paper produced at the 1985 Nairobi World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace. It includes resolution 258 which calls for the elaboration of preventive policies and the institutionalization of assistance to women victims of the various forms of violence experienced in everyday life in all societies. It acknowledges that "women are beaten, mutilated, burned, sexually abused and raped," and that such violence is "a major obstacle to the achievement of the objectives of the Decade and should be given special attention." Other sections of this document (e.g. 76, 245, 271, 288) insist on special training for law enforcement officials who deal with women victims of violent crimes; urge legislation to end the degradation of women through sex related crimes; stress the priority of promoting female human rights, specifically in relation to issues of violence against women; insist on favoring a preventive approach that include institutionalized economic and other forms of assistance; and suggest the establishment of national agencies to deal with the question of domestic violence. In addition to assisting victims of gender violence in the family and in society generally, paragraph 288 demands that:

> Governments should undertake to increase public awareness of violence against women as a societal problem; establish policies and legislative measures to ascertain its causes and prevent and eliminate such violence, in particular by suppressing degrading images and representations of women in society; and finally encourage the development of educational and re-educational measures for offenders (Ibid).

Other UN divisions, like the thirty-second session of the Economic and Social Council Commission on the Status of Women, also address the issue; the report of the Secretary General stated that violence against women, defined as "physical, sexual, emotional, and economic abuse within the family, rape and sexual assault; sexual harassment and trafficking in women; involuntary prostitution; and pornography" all share a common denominator—"the use of coercion to make women do things against their will." (n.p.)

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND VIOLENCE: A CONTRADICTION

When speaking of development, this paper relies on the approach recently adopted by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) known as the Human Development Report (HDR), published in 1990. Reassessing the different approaches that marked the three previous United Nations Development Decades, this document questions the ability of statistical indicators like growth and national income to measure development adequately. Rather, it suggests the need to focus on other aspects of development that provide more accurate and realistic indicators of human development: nutrition and health services, access to knowledge, secure livelihoods, decent working conditions, security against crime and physical violence, satisfying leisure time, and participation in the economic, cultural, and political activities of their communities. From this perspective, the goal of development is to create an environment which enables people to enjoy long, healthy, and creative lives.

Despite three decades of significant progress towards human development in the Third World, particularly in relation to life expectancy, education, and health, one has to examine cautiously the results from a cross-cultural gender perspective. Nowhere do females enjoy the same standards as males, and in some areas gaps have widened so considerably that one must question whether development attempts are intrinsically gendered to the disadvantage of females. As the HDR states:

> In most societies, women fare less well than men. As children they have less access to education and sometimes to food and health care. As adults they receive less education and training, work longer hours for lower incomes, and have few property rights or none. (UN, 1990:31.)

Discrimination against females extends to every aspect of life. If women are fed less, have poorer health and less education than males, and their contribution to society's production and reproduction is underestimated, it is no wonder that wide gender gaps between males and females persist in human development indicators. Looking at development from a human-centered gender perspective requires that development studies focus on women as a demographic category and that development indica-

tors be recorded according to gender. In order for women to benefit from the development process, a fundamental emphasis must be placed on increasing women's self confidence as well as their ability to participate in all aspects of society. Violence against women is in direct contradiction to securing human-centered development goals. It disrupts women's lives and denies them options. It erodes women's confidence and sense of self-esteem at every level, physically and psychologically. It destroys women's health, denies their human rights, and hinders their full participation in society. Where domestic violence keeps a woman from participating in a development project, or fear of sexual assault prevents her from taking a job, or force is used to deprive her of earnings, development does not occur.

Women experience violence as a form of control that limits their ability to pursue options in almost every area of life from the home to the schools, workplaces, and most public spaces. Violence is used to control women's labor in both productive and reproductive capacities. For example, case studies of victims of domestic violence in Peru and of garment workers in the Mexican maquilas showed men beating their wives frequently to demand the income women had earned (Vasquez and Tamayo, 1989; Bruce, 1990). Indonesian female workers returning to their villages complain of their helplessness in the face of harassment and sexual abuse; quite often their wages are withheld for months, preventing possibility of escape or resistance. In the Philippines, women workers in export oriented industries claim that male managers give female employees the choice of "lay down or lay off" (AWRAN Report, 1985).

FEMALE DEPENDENCY

The socially constructed dependency of women on men is key to understanding women's vulnerability to violence. This dependency is frequently economic, and results from various layers of sexist discrimination. First, much of women's work is unpaid labor at home and in the fields which is not valued by society, nor calculated as part of the Gross National Product — the productive work of a nation. Second, even in paid jobs, women work longer hours for lower pay, with fewer benefits and less security than men.

Female dependency extends to other areas as well, psychological, social and cultural. Women are trained to believe that their value is attached to the men in their lives — fathers, brothers, husbands, and sons. They are often socially ostracized if they displease or disobey these men. Women are socialized to associate their self-worth with the satisfaction of the needs and desires of others, and thus, are encouraged to blame themselves as inadequate or bad if men beat them. This socialization process is reinforced by cultures where a woman is constantly diminished, her sexuality commodified, her work and characteristics devalued, her identity shaped by an environment that reduces her to her most biological functions. Yet women are still blamed for "causing" or deserving the abuse of men toward them.

Women's socio-economic and psychological dependency makes it difficult for them to leave situations of domestic violence or sexual harassment. Often in rural settings it is physically impossible; women literally have no place to go or the means to get away, and there are no services available to them. A Commonwealth Secretariat report on domestic violence cites the opinion of experts that a shelter or other safe refuge alternative is only possible in a city of at least 10,000 inhabitants.

But even in large urban settings, where it may be easier for women to leave abusive relationships, there is often nowhere to go as illustrated by the links between domestic violence and homelessness. A shelter for homeless women in Boston reports that about ninety percent of its occupants are victims of domestic violence (*The New York Times*, August 26, 1990), and New York City shelter workers note a similar trend. Australian sociologist, Robert Connell (1987:11) sees the lack of alternative housing as one of the reasons women stay in, or return to, violent marriages. Further, violence itself makes women become even more dependent. Studies from several countries find that the escalation of violence undermines women's self-esteem and their capacity to take action diminishes.

EFFECTS ON FAMILY AND CHILDREN

Violence against women also affects the development and well being of children and families. A recent study on children of battered women in Canada reports post-traumatic stress, clinical

dysfunction, and behavioral and emotional disorders in children from violent homes (Jaffe, Wolfe, and Wilson, 1990). Some argue that children's socialization into accepting or committing violence starts at home when they witness their father beating the mother and sometimes abusing them as well.

It seems increasingly clear that the best way to reduce infant mortality is through the education of women (White House Task Force on Infant Mortality Report, cited in *The New York Times*, August 12, 1990; Buvinic and Yudelman, 1989). The UNDP Human Development Report underlines the high social dividend that comes with female literacy, as demonstrated by lower infant mortality rates, better family nutrition, reduced fertility and lower population growth. Other studies show a connection between women's self-confidence and child mortality. Since the health and psychological well-being of children is connected to the future development of a country, the gender violence implicit in disproportionate female illiteracy is clearly contrary to development. Improving women's self-confidence and education is therefore a crucial investment that may have long lasting effects on children and the future of a nation.

Gender violence also destroys families. The Law Reform Commission of Papua New Guinea study found that husbands, through their violence, were themselves negatively affected in the long run by losing the very basis of their patriarchal control: he may be injured or killed if his wife acts to defend herself, he fails to earn the love and respect of his wife and children, and he frequently loses his family altogether. In Papua New Guinea, as in many countries, battery is one of the main reasons women give for filing for divorce.

COSTS TO SOCIETY

Violence against women deprives society of the full participation of women in all aspects of development. As Lori Heise states:

> Female focused violence undermines widely held goals for economic and social development in the Third World. The development community has come to realize that problems such as high fertility, deforestation and hunger cannot be solved without

> women's full participation. Yet women cannot lend their labor or creative ideas fully when they are burdened with the physical and psychological scars of violence. (Heise, 1989.)

Many work hours are lost as a result of violence, not to speak of the costs of providing services to victims. In this we should take into account the work time lost by the victim herself, plus the work time of police and others in the legal, medical, mental health and social services. It is almost impossible to quantify the total costs of the problem given the limited information available on the extent of such violence. Among the few estimates made, the Australian Committee on Violence calculated that the cost of refuge accommodation for victims of domestic violence for the year 1986-87 was $27.6 million, and in the province of Queensland alone, serious domestic assault cases cost about $108 million Australian dollars a year (Australian Institute of Criminology, 1990:15). However, the greatest cost is one of human misery:

> Beyond such calculable costs lie the costs in human suffering, which are vast. The most significant long term effect and ultimate cost of wife battery, however, is the perpetration of the societal structure, confirmed by marital violence, that keeps women inferior and subordinate to men politically, economically and socially. (UN, 1989:24)

Violence in an environment where public safety measures are inadequate and public transport unprotected, severely limits women's integration into the paid work force. Addressing this problem, a coalition of women's organizations in Bombay demanded the establishment of "ladies only carriages" in mass public transit after serious incidents of sexual harassment of women commuting to and from work. The Toronto Metro Action Committee on Public Violence Against Women and Children (METRAC) has raised awareness and affected public policy regarding the connections between transportation, safety, and women's participation in the work force. Based on an extensive survey of women's concerns about urban planning and design, they lobbied city government to improve lighting, signs, mass transit, and suggested new criteria and guidelines for all buildings in the city. These initiatives are a reminder of how women's freedom in public spaces is often restrained by the way it is designed.

Another example is the lack of adequate sanitation, water and garbage facilities. Frequently, women have to go to desolate places to satisfy basic sanitary needs—a very common experience for women living both in shanty towns and in rural areas—in such situations, they are especially vulnerable to violent crimes.

Violence against women is often a direct obstacle to women's participation in development projects. For example, in a Mexico project funded by the United Nations Development Fund for Women, UNIFEM, instances of wife battering increased with women's sense of empowerment through their participation in it. The project found that men perceived the growing empowerment of women as a threat to their control, and the beatings could be explained as an attempt to reverse this process of empowerment the women experienced in order to drive them away from the project. Similarly, a revolving fund project of the Working Women's Forum in Madras almost collapsed when the most articulate and energetic participants stopped participating because they experienced increased incidents of domestic violence after they had joined. Faced with the same problems, the Association for the Development and Integration of Women (ADIM) in Lima succeeded in its work by initiating programs that combined income-generating schemes with legal aid to battered wives and women abandoned by their partners. (Buvinic and Yudelman, 1989:44)

Even when women continue their involvement in development projects, concern about the problems caused by violence often diverts their energy from pursuing other goals. Sometimes women miss meetings because of fear of beatings, physical disability due to battery, or because they are taking care of another battered woman or her children. Some women decline public visibility due to shame over their injuries since society's "blame the victim" attitude does not create an environment sympathetic to them. In groups that discuss these issues, time spent dealing with violence and the problems accompanying it is time away from other project goals.

Another long term effect of gender violence and the cultural atmosphere that demeans women by condoning such violence, is that it denies developing countries the full talents of their female citizens. Family control and violence encourage some of the best educated women to leave their countries, contributing to the brain

drain in the Third World, and the loss of highly skilled women who could contribute to the development process. Women who stay often must comply with the subordinate role that society assigns them and may be reluctant to be promoted to more visible positions for fear of upsetting their husbands. For example, with regard to Papua New Guinea:

> Threats of violence control women's minds as much as do acts of violence, making women act as their own jailers. This means that a woman makes her choices not on what she wants to do or believes is best, but on what she thinks her husband will allow her to do (Bradley, 1990:5).

HEALTH, AIDS AND VIOLENCE

Health is usually recognized as an important development issue. One of the clearest facts about gender violence is that it is detrimental to women's physical and mental health, including women's very survival. A 1989 report by the Surgeon General of the United States, C. Everett Koop, affirms that battered women are four to five times more likely than non-battered women to require psychiatric treatment, and more likely to commit suicide. He reports that each year some one million women in the United States are sufficiently injured to seek medical assistance at emergency rooms from injuries sustained through battering. These injuries include bruises, concussions, broken noses, teeth, ribs and limbs, throat injuries, lacerations and stab wounds, burns and bites. Injuries are caused by being struck by fists and blunt objects as well as knives, kicks, strangulations, being thrown down stairs and more. In view of the extensive evidence, Koop calls it "an overwhelming moral, economic, and public health burden that our society can no longer bear." He demands a major response from: governments at the national, state, and community levels; legislators and city councils; police, prosecutors, judges and probation officers; health professions and educational institutions; the communications media; the church and clergy; non-governmental organizations; and international organizations "that must demonstrate a clear recognition of the problem and provide the necessary leadership to us all." (Koop, 1989:5-6).

The AIDS crisis has cast unequal gender relations in a new

light. In Africa, a continent where the AIDS epidemic has reached staggering numbers, women are experiencing the effects of male control in multiple and deadly ways. A report of the Health Ministry of Uganda reveals that there are twice as many cases of AIDS among girls between 15 and 19 years old as among boys of the same age group. These numbers reflect a common belief among adult sexually active men that they will have less possibilities of being exposed to the AIDS virus if they engage in sexual intercourse with younger women. In some areas where the control of women is reflected in traditional practices like female circumcision and infibulation of the clitoris, the risks of acquiring the disease have multiplied. Deeply entrenched attitudes and traditions around the world justify men's easy access to women's bodies and result in the transmission of the virus via rape, incest, and other forms of coerced sex. Thus although hard data proving the connection between AIDS and violence against women is not yet available, this is a research area that would expand our understanding of the deadly impact of AIDS on women.

UNDERSTANDING THE CAUSES OF VIOLENCE

Explaining why gender violence is so endemic is a complex endeavor is best pursued here as it relates to the question of prevention. There are innumerable theories ranging from biological and genetic explanations, to those which attribute causation to alcohol and toxic substance abuse, poverty, socialization, and even women themselves (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1987:12). While some of these theories may contain a grain of truth, none of them justify violent behavior and are better understood as co-factors that can concur with a violent situation. The major point here is to look at violence against women as learned behavior, which can be changed. Gender violence can be prevented or, at least, substantially reduced if the social and political will exists to make this happen. This discussion is not intended as an abstract investigation into the origins of violence against women, but as an effort to see how understanding gender violence helps to create preventive strategies that go beyond the social service response.

A Peruvian study by Vasquez and Tamayo (1990:106)

argues that causes of battery are many, including: unequal relations between men and women; the sexual hierarchy; domestic isolation of women with male figures as the final authority; early marriages before women have developed a sense of autonomy; the family as the sole institution that shapes women's identity; the representation of masculinity via the domination of women; poor communication in family conflicts; and, the privatization of conflict between men and women in a couple relationship. This suggests a number of important development objectives that might reduce such violence. Jane Connors describes the pervasiveness of violent behavior:

> [as] best understood in the context of social structure, institutions and codes of conduct. In this context, the abuse of women can be seen as a naked display of male power the outcome of social relations in which women are kept in a position of inferiority to men, responsible to, and in need of protection by them (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1987:14)

The Papua New Guinea study agrees with Connors assertion and states:

> the essence of male violence against women is the sense of inadequacy, of vulnerability, of helplessness, of weakness, and of sheer naked fear that men inspire in women when they threaten or use violence against women. The use of brute force by men makes women feel inferior (Bradley, Ibid)

This suggests the crucial importance of building women's self confidence as a means of countering their vulnerability to violence.

DIRECTIONS FOR POLICY

The problem of violence against women is systemic and common to all societies. This paper specifically looks at strategies for combatting violence against women as related to development planning in the Third World. There are several levels on which those concerned with the consequences of development for women can take action in addressing the connections between gender violence and development. The overall question is how to make use of limited resources to support projects that take into account and challenge the limitations and constraints that vio-

lence places on women's full participation in development activities? The answer lies in the catalytic role which a development agency or project can play at both the programmatic and non-programmatic levels. Central to this catalytic role is a commitment to highlighting the obstacles which gender violence places in the development path, and to identifying means of countering it in all phases of the project cycle: planning, implementation, documentation, evaluation and dissemination of results.

1. Action at multiple program levels:

A. Awareness of the obstacles posed by gender violence

i) In the formulation and implementation phases of a project, an awareness of cultural specific forms of gender violence can help identify and overcome obstacles impeding women's participation. For example, the lack of safe transportation when women interact with unrelated males may require the identification of alternative means of travel which are viable in the local context. The reservation of "ladies only" carts in mass transit in Bombay, or obtaining the protection of the local khan for female health extension workers in Northern Pakistan represent such strategies.

ii) Also at the formulation and implementation stages, sensitivity to situations where changes in women's status make them vulnerable to violence is essential. It is a cultural truism that change is threatening. Project activities might both seek to strengthen women's self-confidence and ability to defend themselves as well as reach out to men in the community, win their commitment to the change, and even change their expectations. Project activities have a responsibility to respond to incidents of violence that occur as a result of the process of empowerment. For example, at the United Nations Development Fund for Women's (UNIFEM) project in Tempoal, Mexico UNIFEM staff had to take time to work with husbands and community members when violence emerged as a result of project participants' changing roles.

iii) In personnel selection for the implementation stage, awareness of violence as an obstacle should be an impor-

tant characteristic. Project management requires not just technical skill, but an awareness of the larger environment and how it must be altered to facilitate women's full participation.

iv) Gender violence which obstructs development, as well as measures which reduce women's vulnerability to violence need to be documented as they occur in the project cycle. It can be noted in periodic reporting, in staff monitoring visits, or in evaluations. The findings can be collected and analyzed as part of lessons learned from project experience.

B. *The integration of statistics on gender violence* into data collection, planning and training projects is central to the visibility and recognition of such violence as an obstacle to development.

C. *Find sustainable ways of deterring gender violence.* On a very direct level, projects can experiment with techniques or interventions which focus on, or deal with, violence. With respect to deterrence, projects which document the extent and severity of violence against women, or which test one or more education campaigns and seek to make violence unacceptable within a society, can serve as models that demonstrate the possibilities and benefits of such approaches. In a similar way, projects dealing with the consequences of violence (rape crisis centers, training of police, magistrates, hospital personnel, etc.) should be supported especially when they have some possibility of testing a new approach, or of influencing the government to initiate services and expand on tested approaches to addressing gender violence.

D. *Increase the capacity of women to identify and combat violence.* Projects which strengthen communication skills, raise women's awareness of possible actions, build management skills, teach self-defense, and strengthen women's organizations at the same time contribute to enlarging the capacity of women to address gender specific violence.

2. Non-Programmatic Steps

The international development community, and particularly women's agencies within that community, can undertake important changes which are not project related, and would not require additional expenditures beyond staff time. This involves making violence visible as a development issue in relation to many other themes. By disseminating reports of projects concerned with violence, women's advocates within the development community can highlight the impact of violence on program activity.

Overall, development agencies and organizations addressing women in development must conduct their program and project work with an increased sensitivity to the issue of violence, and the ways in which development itself brings forth new forms of gendered violence. It is important to address gender violence as an aspect of many other development projects such as income generating schemes or housing plans and not just those specifically focused on violence against women. International development agencies such as the United Nations Development Program, UNIFEM, the World Health Organization, and the International Labour Organization, which are concerned with the issue of women in development, need to use their leverage and prestige as international agencies to expand the legitimacy and give voice to the groups working on these areas at the national or community level.

CONCLUSION

Attempts to integrate women into development are doomed to failure if they do not address the issue of violence against women. This paper has attempted to build the case for the international development community's support of projects that address the various manifestations of gender violence as legitimate development projects. It maintains that projects that deal with violence towards women are building blocks for a more comprehensive, empowering, and therefore sustainable effort which will tap women's full participation in the development process.

Countering violence against women is not only eliminating

an obstacle to the development of women but also actively addressing women's realization of their full potential. This quote from an interview with a popular education worker in Mexico illustrates the potential of this work:

> *Q. How do you address the issue of violence?*
>
> A. When women explore their social roles, if the issue of violence doesn't arise, the workshop methodology is not addressing the issues of gender. We ask women to choose which experience of violence they would like to explore of those they have mentioned—children dying of hunger, battering, economic hardships. They usually choose domestic violence as they already understand and confront the other kinds of violence. To confront economic violence, they sell food or demand government subsidies. But there are other aspects of violence that they can't even talk about in their family, with their neighbors or in their organization. These forbidden themes are the basis of work with gender. There is not much to discover about being poor. But as women look at what it means to be women (poor women), they gain the desire to live, learn to express themselves, they see how they are reproducing sexual roles in their children. They discover the causes of their oppression and are empowered to act. (Correspondencia, August, 1990.)

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